best copy available

Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering the wisest use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places, and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to assure that their development is in the best interests of all our people. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

The Bureau of Land Management is responsible for the balanced management of the public lands and resources and their various values so that they are considered in a combination that will best serve the needs of the American people. Management is based upon the principles of multiple use and sustained yield, a combination of uses that takes into account the long term needs of future generations for renewable and non-renewable resources. These resources include recreation, range, timber, minerals, watershed, fish and wildlife, wilderness, and natural, scenic, scientific and cultural values.

TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA

P21

HIKERS GUIDE TO PARIA CANYON

Paria Canyon-Vermilion Cliffs Wilderness

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

I53.11:

REGISTRATION

All hikers must register before entering Paria Canyon, Buckskin Gulch, or any other area within the Paria Canyon portion of the Paria Canyon-Vermilion Cliffs Wilderness (the area shown on the map on the reverse side of the brochure). Registration must be made within 24 hours of your hike to insure that you receive current weather information. Weather conditions may change rapidly, and forecast data usually are not reliable for periods in excess of 24 hours. Registration is not required for hiking within the Vermilion Cliffs portion of the Wilderness (see inset map). For your safety, it is recommended that you notify BLM if you wish to hike in the Vermilion Cliffs.

You may register in person at the Kanab Area Office during regular office hours (7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays, except holidays), located at 318 North First East in Kanab. Registration may also be made by telephone to this office (801-644-2672).

You may also register in person at the Paria Ranger Station, adjacent to U.S. Highway 89 at the turn-off to the White House Trailhead. The station is usually open from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., Thursday through Monday. Occasionally, the station is closed while the ranger is on patrol. If the ranger is absent, the weather forecast is posted on the sign at the Paria Ranger Station, as well as information on whether the canyons are open or closed to hiking. If canyon hiking is posted as OPEN, you may register yourself at the trailhead where you plan to begin your hike. If hiking is CLOSED, the weather forecast is unfavorable and dangerous flash flooding may occur, and you must not enter the canyons.

Registration is important because it allows monitoring of visitors in the canyons should emergency situations occur. Also, you can be informed of current weather and hiking conditions and of temporary or permanent restrictions on visitor use, such as campsite closures or limitations on the number of hikers. These types of restrictions may become necessary to protect or enhance wilderness values.

Group size is restricted to 15 people for a backpacking party. Organized groups (scout troops, schools, hiking clubs, etc.) must contact BLM at least 2 weeks prior to hiking.

BLM regulations require commercial operators to obtain a Special Recreation Use Permit. Contact the BLM office in Kanab for further details.

VISITOR USE REGULATIONS

No campfires are allowed within Paria Canyon, Buckskin Gulch, and all other tributary canyons. Fires produce charcoal and ashes that blacken campsites. Use of campfires in the past has left unsightly scars and fire rings, usually containing deposits of blackened, unburnable trash.

Do not litter! Carry out all trash. Do not burn or bury it. This includes all biodegradable material, leftover food, and cigarette butts. **If you are able to pack it in, you should be able to pack it out!** Please help keep the wilderness clean by picking up litter left by thoughtless visitors.

Bury human waste and toilet paper in a "cat hole" type of latrine, up to 6 inches deep. Burn the toilet paper in the hole before burial, if it is safe to do so. Make your latrine at least 100 feet away from the river and away from any campsite locations.

Do not make your camp close to any spring. Choose a sandy, open area devoid of vegetation for all campsite activities. Cutting of trees, limbs or other plants to make camp "improvements" is prohibited. Trenching around tents is unnecessary in a desert environment. Avoid making new trails around campsite locations. Use existing routes onto the river terraces for your camp. The area should be clean and appear natural when you break camp.

Washing of pots and pans or for purposes of personal hygiene should be done away from springs. Wash without using soap. Even biodegradable soap and toothpaste can cause pollution.

Dogs are allowed, but they must be restrained from disturbing wildlife or other hikers. If possible, leave your pet at home.

Be considerate of others. If a campsite is occupied, move on to another site. Respect the other person's right to privacy. Try to keep your group size as small as possible. Excessive noise such as yelling or loud music, etc. disturbs others who may be walking or camping nearby. Observe quiet hours after dusk.

Drinking water is usually available at the Paria Ranger Station. (Occasionally, the water system is turned off for servicing.)

The Paria Canyon-Vermilion Cliffs Wilderness is closed to motorized equipment, motor vehicles, or other forms of mechanical transport. This includes bicycles and hang gliders.

The Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (ARPA) prohibits disturbing or defacing Indian ruins, sites, or rock art panels. This includes removal of broken pieces of pottery, bone, or stone tools from the surface of any site. Camping is not allowed on or adjacent to any archaeological site. Please report any violations of ARPA to BLM field personnel, National Park Service rangers, or the BLM office in Kanab.

ADMINISTRATION

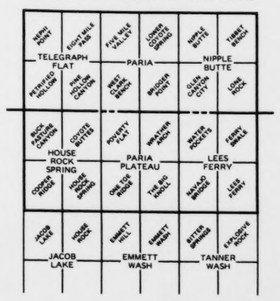
The Paria Canyon-Vermilion Cliffs Wilderness is located in Kane County, Utah and Coconino County, Arizona, and is administered by the Cedar City and Arizona Strip Districts of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The mouth of Paria Canyon at Lees Ferry is administered by Glen Canyon National Recreation Area.

Congress established the 112,000-acre Paria Canyon-Vermilion Cliffs Wilderness under the Arizona Wilderness Act of 1984. Prior to wilderness designation, from 1969 to 1984, Paria Canyon was managed as a BLM primitive area, and the Vermilion Cliffs were managed as a BLM natural area.

The dominant management goal is to provide for the long-term protection and preservation of the area as wilderness. BLM manages the wilderness so that the natural condition, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation, and any ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value will remain unimpaired. Management objectives include providing information and assistance to visitors for a safe and enjoyable hiking experience in a wilderness setting. Certain visitor use restrictions are necessary because the wilderness resource is dominant in all management decisions where a choice must be made between wilderness preservation and visitor use.

U.S.G.S. Topographic Maps

An index of the U.S.G.S. topographic maps which cover the Paria Canyon-Vermilion Cliffs Wilderness is shown below. Maps are available from: U.S. Geological Survey, Public Inquiries Office, 8105 Federal Bldg., 125 South State, Salt Lake City, Utah 84138 (phone 801-524-5652).



Please note that several of the 7.5′ maps shown on this index had not been published at the time of the printing of this brochure. Contact the U.S.G.S. office to find out which maps are available. All of the 15′ maps shown are currently available.

EMERGENCIES

IF AN EMERGENCY OCCURS
Contact:

National Park Service
Glen Canyon National Recreation Area
Wahweap Ranger Station
Page, Arizona
24-hour emergency number..... (602) 645-9585

If an emergency occurs in the upper part of the canyons, the incident should be reported to the BLM ranger at the Paria Ranger Station. If the ranger is absent, the nearest telephone is located at Church Wells, 7 miles east on U.S. 89. If an emergency occurs in the lower part of the canyon, the incident should be reported to the National Park Service rangers at Lees Ferry. If these rangers are absent, telephones are located at the Lees Ferry Ranger Station and the boat launch ramp.

GEOLOGY

The geologic formations comprising the walls of Paria Canyon were deposited from approximately 130 to 200 million years ago at a time when dinosaurs roamed the earth. During this time conditions in the area alternated between sea, lake, and desert. Then, following millions of years of uplift, erosion, and deposition, the ancestral drainages of the Colorado Plateau were developed. About 10 million years ago the entire region began to be uplifted, producing the present day topography of the Colorado Plateau. Some of the ancestral drainages were deeply downcut while maintaining their original courses, forming deep canyons as a result of this uplift of several thousands of feet. Other drainages were disrupted and may have changed their courses. The Paria River appears to have maintained its course as it downcut to form the deep and narrow canyon through which you hike; the evolution of the course of the Colorado River, into which the Paria flows, remains a geologic mystery.

As you enter Paria Canyon from the north, you pass through red and gray siltstones and sandstones of the Carmel Formation, the youngest rocks of the canyon. At White House Trailhead the pale gray Page Sandstone intertongues with the Carmel. The massive Navajo Sandstone, underlying the Carmel, makes up most of the first half of the canyon. The Navajo was deposited in a desert environment, as exemplified by the swirling crossbeds of ancient sand dunes observable in the canyon walls. The Narrows and Wrather Arch are carved from this 1,700-foot-thick layer of solidified sand. Just below Wrather Canyon you enter the Kayenta Formation, and then pass through the Moenave Formation in a 5-mile stretch. The beds of the Kayenta and Moenave indicate deposition in a stream environment. As you begin to pass through the Chinle Formation the canyon widens markedly. The soft colorful bentonitic mudstone of the Petrified Forest member of the Chinle represents a volatile time when volcanic ash, reworked by streams, covered the area. The oldest rocks in the canyon are the chocolate brown sandstones and siltstones of the Moenkopi Formation, capped by the resistant sandstones and conglomerates of the Shinarump member of the Chinle. These rocks are encountered a few miles upstream from Lees Ferry. Some of the uranium production of the Colorado Plateau comes from areas where streams scoured channels in the top of the Moenkopi and filled them with sand and gravel of the Shinarump. Although little uranium has been discovered locally, the Lees Ferry area was the site of considerable uranium exploration during the 1950s and 1960s.

The largest and most spectacular tributary to the Paria Canyon is Buckskin Gulch. This twisting slot canyon has been eroded in the Navajo Sandstone by a stream with a relatively steep gradient. Erosion has produced many interesting features in the narrow canyon walls. In places the gorge is less than 2 feet in width, and the undulating, near-vertical walls block skyward vision.

A trip through the 37-mile-long Paria Canyon constitutes a tour through 200 million years of geologic time.

GEOLOGIC TIME SCALE

PERIOD	DISTINCTIVE FEATURES	FORMATION		DESCRIPTION OF FORMATION
Jurassic	First Birds, First Mammals, Many Dinosaurs, First Pine Forests	Carmel Formation		Reddish-brown siltstone. Deposited in narrow seaway that extended south from Canada. Exposed in the cliffs around the Paria Ranger Station.
		Page Sandstone		Pale-yellow to gray crossbedded sandstone, similar to Navajo. Intertongues with Carmel in the Paria Canyon area. Exposed at White House Trailhead.
	?	Navajo Sandstone		White to pale-red cliff-forming sandstone. Deposited in massive crossbedded sand dunes indicating a desert climate. Exposed at Paria Narrows and Wrather Arch.
		Kayenta Formation		Reddish-brown and gray siltstone. Deposited in a fluvial (river) environment. First exposed below Wrather Canyon.
		Moenave Formation		Ledge-forming red-purple sandstone with red-gray shales. Exposed in the Paria near the last spring (#17).
Triassic	First Dinosaurs, Abundant Palm-like Plants (Cycads), Ferns, and Conifers	Chinle Formation	Undifferentiated Chinle	Variegated sandy and conglomerate shales, sandstones, limestones, and bentonitic mudstones with multicolored layers. Contains petrified wood.
			Shinarump Member	Mesa-forming buff sandstone and conglomerate. Contains petrified wood. Scars from uranium mining can be seen in the Shinarump below the Wilson Ranch to Lees Ferry.
		Moenkopi Formation		Chocolate, red, and gray shales and siltstones with gypsum. Forms the lower slopes surrounding Lees Ferry.

WILDLIFE

The Paria Canyon-Vermilion Cliffs Wilderness provides habitat for a variety of interesting wildlife species. Both bald and golden eagles have been sighted, as well as the endangered peregrine falcon. A number of other bird species, ranging from the larger birds such as ravens, several kinds of hawks, and chukar, to smaller species such as doves, killdeer, white-throated swifts, and cliff swallows, are commonly found here.

Desert bighorn sheep have been successfully reintroduced into the wilderness, and the population is expanding. Mule deer occur throughout the canyon, but the number of deer is relatively low. Occasionally bobcats, foxes, and even mountain lions are seen, as are coyotes, porcupines, and beaver. Small mammals such as jack rabbits, cottontails, ground squirrels, bats, kangaroo rats, and other rodents are common.

Several species of small fish, such as speckled dace, live in the Paria River despite flash floods that sweep the canyon during summer months. Other fish sometimes enter the lower portion of the Paria River from the Colorado River. Many reptiles and amphibians also inhabit Paria Canyon. A variety of lizards, snakes, toads, and frogs can be seen, especially during the summer.

Rattlesnakes do occur within the wilderness, although they are more common above the canyon rims than in the canyon bottoms. A rattlesnake bite can be fatal. Treat these snakes with caution and respect. Scorpions also occur in the area during the summer, but are nocturnal and rarely seen. Scorpion stings are extremely painful, though seldom fatal.

PLANNING YOUR HIKE

Visitor Use

Many visitors arrive at the Paria Canyon trailheads eager to "get away from it all" and are disappointed to discover that many other people had the same idea. In order to assist you in planning a trip through the canyon, the following visitor use figures are given. (These figures are averaged from the 5-year period from 1982 to 1986.)

Month	Avg. No. of Hikers
January	23
February	19
March	187
April	237
May	468
June	325
July	78
August	52
September	98
October	165
November	72
December	27

Peak use periods at Paria Canyon usually coincide with spring breaks at colleges and universities. Large numbers of hikers also visit this area during Easter and Memorial Day holiday periods and at the end of the school year.

PLANNING YOUR HIKE

Paria Canyon

Paria Canyon offers an outstanding 37-mile hike for the average, well prepared hiker. An average of four days is recommended to make the hike from White House Trailhead to Lees Ferry. The hike is considered moderately strenuous.

The hiking conditions change with the seasons. During the popular spring season, plan on hiking in water ankle-to-knee deep. Normally, during May and June the Paria is dry for the first 7 miles, and the remainder of the hike downstream from the Buckskin confluence is in very shallow water. For several days following flooding, hiking in the canyon can be very rigorous. Expect lots of quicksand and slippery footing along the streambanks after a flood.

There are usually no major obstacles within the first 27 miles. At the boulder slide (#20) most hikers leave the river and follow a trail on the right (south) side of the stream. Some boulder hopping is required. If you choose to stay along the river, plan on numerous pools and boulders which can make the route arduous during the spring runoff. The lower canyon is easily traversed over long benches with intermittent stream crossings. Shade is at a premium, so don't miss the last spring identified on the map (#17). Take care in hiking and carry plenty of water in hot weather.

The hike terminates at Lees Ferry. The paved parking area and trailhead can be reached by staying in the river channel for 1 mile past the registration box (#25). Follow the left canyon wall past the stream gauge to the parking area. Please leave your vehicle in this designated parking area while you hike.

Car shuttle service for Paria Canyon hikers is available at Lees Ferry and at Page, Arizona. For further information on car shuttles, please contact the BLM office in Kanab at least several days before you plan to arrive at the trailheads.

If you desire additional information on the Paria Canyon portion of the Wilderness, please contact BLM, Kanab Resource Area, 318 North First East, Kanab, Utah 84741 (801-644-2672).

Buckskin Gulch

The Buckskin Gulch tributary is recommended for the experienced and well prepared hiker. Seasonal floods can drastically change hiking conditions in this canyon. During some years, the hike from the Buckskin or Wire Pass trailheads to the Paria River confluence can be very strenuous. Under the best possible hiking conditions, this narrow gorge can be traversed in approximately 12 hours of difficult travel. Once you are within this canyon, there are very few safe camping areas or places of refuge. At one location (#D) approximately halfway through, you can climb to safe terrain above the canyon. No drinking water is available in the canyon; it must be carried with you.

Some of the obstacles usually encountered on a hike through this side canyon are: several miles of cobble-sized rock making for difficult footing; large and deep pools of water, which may require swimming (these pools become stagnant towards the end of June); and log and rock jams, which may require the use of ropes to assure a safe descent.

Flash floods are **extremely** dangerous in Buckskin Gulch. Flood waters travel as far as 35 miles before reaching the constricted canyon bottom. Flood debris has been observed lodged between the canyon walls at a height in excess of 50 feet above the stream bottom.

During years with normal weather conditions, the Buckskin is most easily traversed from late April through June. Be sure you know the current weather and canyon conditions before entering this area. The only time you may exercise caution is prior to entering the canyon! If you desire more specific information concerning Buckskin Gulch, please contact the BLM office in Kanab.

Vermilion Cliffs

The Vermilion Cliffs portion of the wilderness offers interesting hikes and climbing routes. The views from the top of the cliffs are among the finest in the area. If you desire further information on the Vermilion Cliffs, contact BLM, Vermilion Resource Area, 225 North Bluff St., St. George, Utah 84770 (801-628-4491).

HISTORY OF PARIA CANYON

Indian petroglyphs and other archaeological sites indicate that Paria (pronounced Pah-ree-ah) Canyon had a long history of use by a group known as the Anasazi, an ancient Puebloan people. The Anasazi, whose presence in the area peaked from 900-1150 A.D., used the canyon as a transportation route and a temporary use area for hunting and gathering plants.

The Anasazi culture had disappeared from Paria Canyon by 1200 A.D, and was replaced by the Southern Paiute, who continue to live in this region. The Paria area constitutes a portion of the Paiutes traditional homelands.

The first white men to visit Paria Canyon were members of the Dominguez-Escalante expedition in 1776. The group spent a week at the mouth of the Paria in an attempt to find a way to cross the Colorado River. The expedition found a route over the rim of Paria Canyon about 2 miles upstream from the mouth, and then continued along the northern side of Glen Canyon until they discovered the Colorado River ford at the Crossing of the Fathers.

Almost 100 years later, in 1869, John Wesley Powell passed by the mouth of the Paria River during his epic Colorado River exploration. That same year Jacob Hamblin, the Mormon missionary to the Hopi Indians, crossed the Colorado at the mouth of the Paria. In December of 1871, John D. Lee was sent to establish a ferry on the Colorado at this site, which now bears his name. He spent eight days moving his cattle from the Pahreah settlement (a few miles upstream from the wilderness area) down the Paria River to Lees Ferry. Lee, his son, and two other men, became the first white men to traverse the entire length of Paria Canyon.

In Paria Canyon at Judd Hollow remnants of an old pumping station dates from the 1940s, when an attempt was made to pump water from the Paria to grazing lands on the plateau above.

SAFETY

FLASH FLOOD WARNING - During July, August, and September, there is a high danger of flash floods from thunderstorms. Flash floods also occur at other times of year. The danger is most acute in the Paria Narrows and Buckskin Gulch, where water can typically reach depths of 10 feet and, not uncommonly, 20 feet. These floods are life threatening and can be fatal. If an unexpected storm develops and you find yourself in a flash flood situation, get to the highest point possible. Usually flood conditions will subside in 8 to 12 hours, although a prolonged storm could leave you stranded for several days. Stay in a safe place until the water subsides. Never make a hike without notifying someone of your expected departure and arrival dates. An additional day's food supply should be carried in case you become stranded in a flood situation.

Water - Be sure you know the locations of dependable water sources in Paria Canyon. The first reliable spring is 12 miles from White House as you enter the canyon, with no reliable spring water in the last 12 miles of the canyon before you exit at Lees Ferry. All water should be treated. Do not drink the water in the Paria River because the river may be polluted by upstream sources. Chemical pollutants such as herbicides cannot be removed by filters or by treatment with iodine or chlorine.

Heat Exhaustion - For hot weather hiking carry a minimum supply of 2 quarts of water per person per day. If you become ill from the heat, rest with your head down and loosen your clothing.

Quicksand - Quicksand is especially prevalent in Paria Canyon following floods. If you step in quicksand, don't panic! It is unlikely that you will sink past your knees. If you find yourself in deep quicksand, remove your pack and toss it to solid ground. Then slowly crawl out. Quicksand in the Paria River is usually more unpleasant than dangerous.

Please don't litter

PLANNING YOUR HIKE

Generalized Weather Conditions for Paria Canyon

The chart below shows the average temperatures, precipitation, and flash flood frequency for Paria Canyon. This information, extracted from U.S. Geological Survey records for Lees Ferry, may be helpful to you in planning your hike.

MONTH	PRECIPITATION	AIR TEMPERATURE		FLASH FLOOD FREQUENCY*
	Inches	Mean Max.	Mean Min.	
January	.38	47	25	1/5
February	.47	57	31	1/10
March	.49	66	39	3/10
April	.39	77	48	0
May	.31	86	56	1/10
June	.24	96	64	0
July	.73	106	72	1.9
August	1.18	100	70	3.0
September	.51	94	61	1.4
October	.42	79	49	3/10
November	.39	61	35	1/2
December	.44	49	27	3/10

*Flash Flood Frequency: A flash flood is defined as a rise in daily runoff of 50 cfs (cubic feet per second) or more. The actual rise in runoff rate will normally occur over a short period of time and be maintained for 1 - 4 days. Periodically, 200 - 400 cfs rises in river level are recorded. A frequency of 1/5 indicates a flash flood occurred during this month once in 5 years. A 3.0 indicates an average of 3 flash floods during this month each year. A 0 indicates there have been no flash floods during this month in the 10-year record used for computing this chart.

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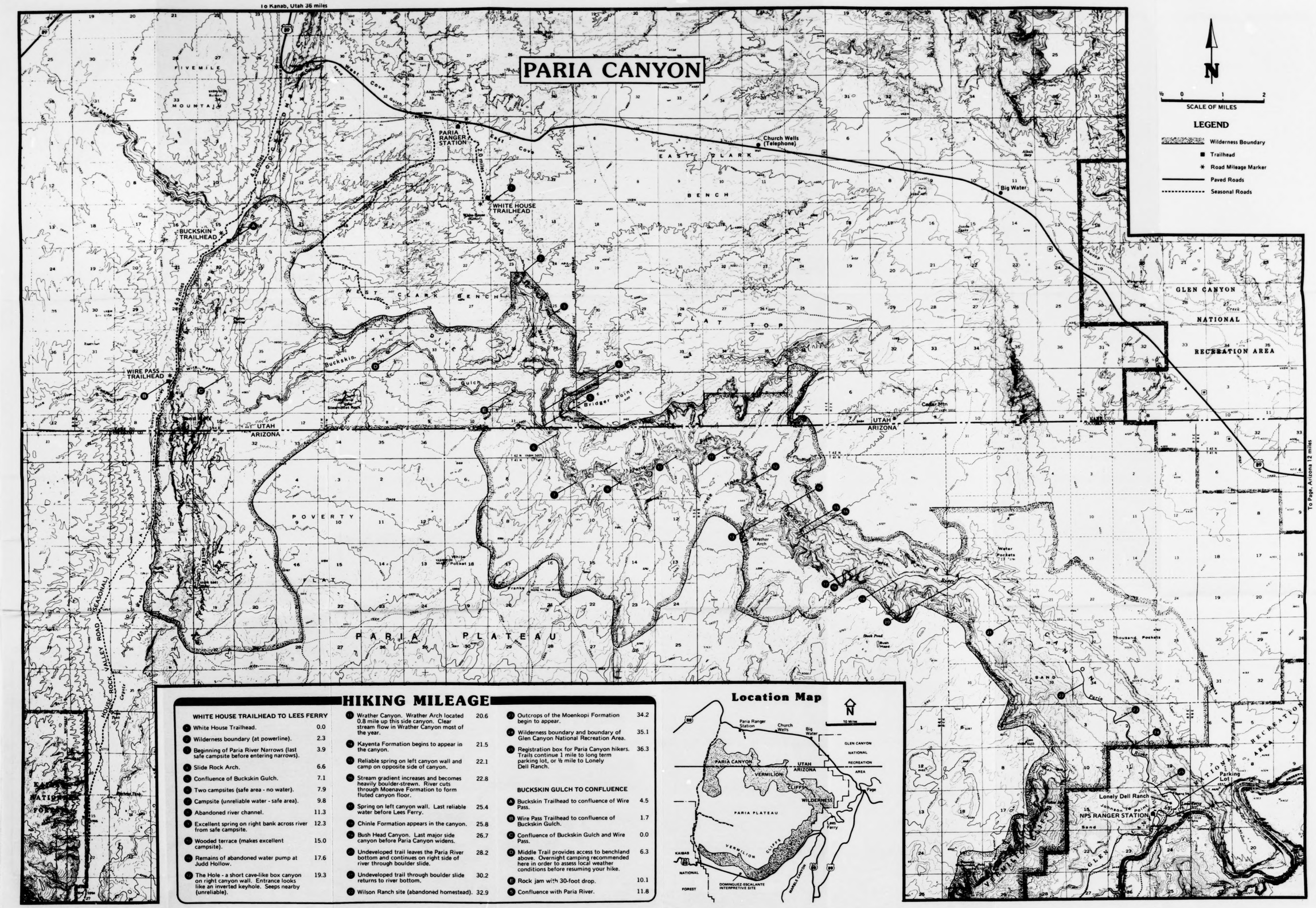
PARIA CANYON



HIKING MILEAGE

WHITE HOUSE TRAILHEAD TO LEES FERRY

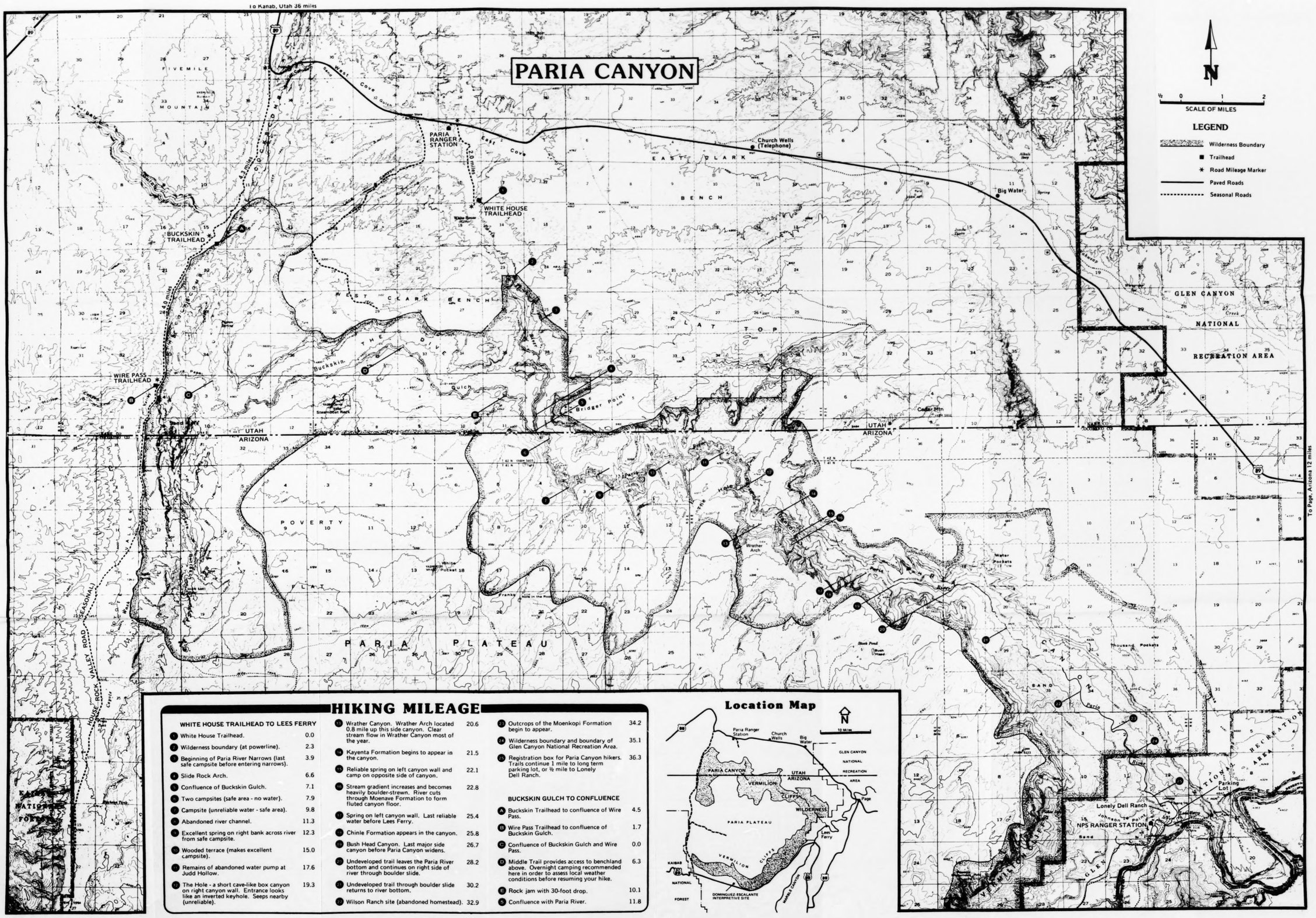
1	White House Trailhead.	0.0
2	Wilderness boundary (at powerline).	2.3
3	Beginning of Paria River Narrows (last safe campsite before entering narrows).	3.9
4	Slide Rock Arch.	6.6
5	Confluence of Buckskin Gulch.	7.1
6	Two campsites (safe area - no water).	7.9
7	Campsite (unreliable water - safe area).	9.8
8	Abandoned river channel.	11.3
9	Excellent spring on right bank across river from safe campsite.	12.3
10	Wooded terrace (makes excellent campsite).	15.0
11	Remains of abandoned water pump at Judd Hollow.	17.6
12	The Hole - a short cave-like box canyon on right canyon wall. Entrance looks like an inverted keyhole. Seeps nearby (unreliable).	19.3
13	Wrather Canyon. Wrather Arch located 0.8 mile up this side canyon. Clear stream flow in Wrather Canyon most of the year.	20.6
14	Kayenta Formation begins to appear in the canyon.	21.5
15	Reliable spring on left canyon wall and camp on opposite side of canyon.	22.1
16	Stream gradient increases and becomes heavily boulder-strewn. River cuts through Moenave Formation to form fluted canyon floor.	22.8
17	Spring on left canyon wall. Last reliable water before Lees Ferry.	25.4
18	Chinle Formation appears in the canyon.	25.8
19	Bush Head Canyon. Last major side canyon before Paria Canyon widens.	26.7
20	Undeveloped trail leaves the Paria River bottom and continues on right side of river through boulder slide.	28.2
21	Undeveloped trail through boulder slide returns to river bottom.	30.2
22	Wilson Ranch site (abandoned homestead).	32.9
23	Outcrops of the Moenkopi Formation begin to appear.	34.2
24	Wilderness boundary and boundary of Glen Canyon National Recreation Area.	35.1
25	Registration box for Paria Canyon hikers. Trails continue 1 mile to long term parking lot, or ½ mile to Lonely Dell Ranch.	36.3

BUCKSKIN GULCH TO CONFLUENCE

A	Buckskin Trailhead to confluence of Wire Pass.	4.5
B	Wire Pass Trailhead to confluence of Buckskin Gulch.	1.7
C	Confluence of Buckskin Gulch and Wire Pass.	0.0
D	Middle Trail provides access to benchland above. Overnight camping recommended here in order to assess local weather conditions before resuming your hike.	6.3
E	Rock jam with 30-foot drop.	10.1
S	Confluence with Paria River.	11.8

Location Map

PARIA CANYON



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SCALE OF MILES

0 1 2

LEGEND

- Wilderness Boundary
- Trailhead
- Road Mileage Marker
- Paved Roads
- Seasonal Roads

HIKING MILEAGE

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